

**ANNUAL
REPORT**
2019 – 2020

ChildFund Timor-Leste is the representative office of ChildFund Australia – an independent international development organisation that works to reduce poverty for children in developing communities.

ChildFund Australia is a member of the ChildFund Alliance – a global network of 11 organisations which assists almost 16 million children and their families in over 60 countries. ChildFund Australia is a registered charity, a member of the Australian Council for International Development, and fully accredited by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade which manages the Australian Government's overseas aid program.

ChildFund began work in Timor-Leste in 1990, originally under the management of ChildFund International. Since October 2017 it has operated as an office of ChildFund Australia and works in partnership to create community and systems change which enables vulnerable children and young people, in all their diversity, to assert and realise their rights.

ChildFund Timor-Leste's projects focus on maternal and child health, nutrition, early childhood development, education, youth empowerment and disaster preparedness. ChildFund Timor-Leste aims to demonstrate effectiveness and accountability in its program activities and add value to the efforts of its partners through quality programs that are respectful, responsive, and relevant in helping children in poverty, their families, and communities.

ChildFund Timor-Leste is working with rural communities to build a new, stable, and prosperous future for what is one of the world's youngest nations.

ChildFund Timor-Leste

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Front cover: Domin, age 4, Timor-Leste



The COVID-19 pandemic has been an unwelcome feature of the past financial year. The first patient in Timor-Leste was identified in March 2020, after which the government announced a State of Emergency.

Mandatory quarantine measures, and the closure of borders, have to date helped to prevent a community outbreak of the virus. At the same time, lockdown measures have had an enormous impact on family incomes and children's education.

Despite the many challenges resulting from the pandemic, ChildFund Timor-Leste has been able to continue programs in rural areas which support vulnerable children and their families.

Our education projects have focused on community-based preschools, reading clubs in primary schools and communities, and training teachers in Lautem, Liquica and Manatuto municipalities.

When schools closed we adapted our activities and began distributing education packs to children, using the books from reading clubs to set up box libraries. We also made a newly developed digital library – with more than 100 books written in Tetun – available to parents and children through a free app, accessible on any android phone.

Our health program staff, partners and community health volunteers – who support pregnant women, mothers and their newborns – have been active in raising awareness about COVID-19 and preventative measures in communities.

Households with children enrolled in our malnutrition rehabilitation activities have received food packages and recipes, allowing them to continue cooking nutritious food for their children.

Youth in Covalima and Bobonaro, from our Inspiring Youth Changemakers project, developed scripts for short films and were engaged to raise awareness about COVID-19 with their peers through a social media

campaign. The short films covered topics related to COVID-19 prevention, as well as issues such as gender-based violence. The success and quality of the films and campaign reflected the creativity, leadership and life skills the young people involved in these activities have developed through the project.

ChildFund's disaster risk reduction (DRR) activities in Lautem continued. This included training DRR committees, and promoting home gardens and tree planting in communities. Our DRR project team and local partners supported the COVID-19 municipality taskforce in Lautem to raise awareness of the virus and help establish handwashing facilities in crucial areas such as health posts and markets. We also supported families to create simple handwashing stations at home.

This year also marked the end of our child sponsorship program, which has been operating in Timor-Leste for over 20 years. During that time, the program has benefited 37,000 children in five municipalities. The end of the program means we bid farewell to three local partners, who have grown to become independent organisations determined to continue serving their communities.

The majority of our child sponsors will continue supporting children in Timor-Leste through ChildFund's Global Community program. We are excited as this ongoing support allows us to continue to run impactful projects that address the critical issues faced by too many children in Timor-Leste. You will find examples of some of these projects in this annual report.

We remain grateful to all our generous donors and implementing partners who have made the achievements in the past year possible. I would also like to thank our staff, whose swift action and innovation over the past several months has allowed us to respond to the impact of the COVID-19 crisis, and continue to serve children and their communities in Timor-Leste.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'ERINE', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Erine Dijkstra
Country Director
ChildFund Timor-Leste

We want every child with whom we work to be able to say:

I AM SAFE

Community health volunteers keeping mothers and babies safe

In many remote, mountainous areas of Timor-Leste, the lack of health facilities and information can be devastating for pregnant women, mothers and their newborn babies.

ChildFund Timor-Leste is training community health volunteers to give mothers and babies in these communities access to critical maternal and child health information. These volunteers are helping to ensure mothers attend pre-natal and post-natal check-ups, and that they give birth with the assistance of qualified health professionals.

When Judite went into a frightening labour with her son Marcelo, community health volunteer Odete (pictured left, in green, with Judite and her children) helped her access an ambulance and give birth safely with the help of a midwife.

Since Marcelo was born, Odete has been monitoring his health. She has the skills and knowledge to identify common childhood illnesses, record his growth, and make sure Marcelo gets the medical treatment and nutrition he needs in this critical stage of his life.

- COVID-19 response highlight -

A text messaging service is a feature of this project, connecting families in hard-to-reach communities with health professionals. The service reminds pregnant women and mothers of when check-ups are due, and provides vital information and advice.

As part of ChildFund's COVID-19 response activities, the service has also been adapted to provide information about COVID-19. Mothers and families have been receiving text messages about prevention methods, symptoms and treatment. Pregnant and breastfeeding mothers have also been receiving advice on treatment options if they fall ill.

Community health volunteer Odete (in green) with Judite and her children.



I AM EDUCATED

Trained teachers and new books helping to engage children

Poor quality teaching and a lack of resources have long been some of the barriers to improving low literacy levels across Timor-Leste, with many children reaching Grade 4 and still unable to read.

ChildFund Timor-Leste has partnered with Mary MacKillop Today to improve the educational outcomes of students by providing schools with books and training education staff in child-friendly teaching methods. Over the past year, ChildFund and Mary MacKillop Today have distributed 4,548 books to 12 schools in Liquica municipality, benefiting 1,374 students between Grades 1 and 4.

Teachers are now implementing engaging and interactive activities for their classes, such as using singing, dancing and drawing to promote literacy

and numeracy learning. Teachers and parents can also access videos on storytelling and literacy and numeracy to help them develop lessons for children.

Seven-year-old student Jujunia (pictured below) is an avid reader and has been borrowing some of the new books at her school to read at home.

"The books are helping a lot of children at my school to read," the Grade 2 student says.



I CONTRIBUTE

Empowering young people to become agents of positive change

Timor-Leste is one of the youngest countries in the Asia-Pacific region, with the majority of the population under the age of 35. There are few opportunities, however, for young people to voice their opinions and ideas, and contribute to the development of their communities.

ChildFund Timor-Leste and local partner Ba Futuru are helping young people in Bobonaro and Covalima municipalities to become positive “changemakers”. Through training sessions, youth from disadvantaged backgrounds are learning leadership, money management and community engagement and life skills.

Nineteen-year-old Zehna, who is participating in ChildFund and Ba Futuru’s youth project in Bobonaro, has been helping to draw attention to, and change views on, violence against girls and women.

Using the skills she has learnt in the training sessions, Zehna (pictured right, in red) and her peers have

been staging theatre performances in their community about domestic violence.

“In my village, domestic violence happens a lot,” Zehna says. “If I ever become a leader in my village I want women to never be victims again, and for there to be no cases of domestic violence.”



Zehna, age 19 (in red), participating in a theatre performance with other youth to educate her community about domestic violence.

I HAVE A FUTURE

Supporting families to raise healthy and strong children

Children in Timor-Leste suffer from some of the highest burdens of malnutrition in the world.

The effects of malnutrition, particularly during the first few years of life, can affect a child’s development. Malnutrition can result in wasting or stunting, and affect a child’s ability to learn, which can limit their education and access to future opportunities.

ChildFund Timor-Leste is working in Lautem – one of the regions in Timor-Leste with the highest rates of underweight children under the age of five – to help ensure babies and young children get a healthy and balanced diet during their early years.

Support groups led by ChildFund-trained community health volunteers (pictured right) are helping caregivers improve their knowledge and parenting practices. In these groups, caregivers learn about child nutrition, breastfeeding and household hygiene, and the importance of seeking out local health services.

ChildFund is also helping to make sure children have their growth regularly monitored and have

access to deworming tablets, essential vitamins and vaccinations.

Families are also being supported to establish home gardens so they can grow local, nutritious foods.

As part of ChildFund’s COVID-19 response activities, caregivers attending support groups were trained on COVID-19 and helped distribute soap and information about the virus, and promote handwashing and social distancing practices in communities. ChildFund also helped to distribute food packages for children and their families.



A mothers support group

Jenilda, age 4, with her mother Victoria, has received an educational pack from ChildFund to ensure she can keep learning while schools are closed.



I AM EDUCATED

Supporting children to continue learning and playing during COVID-19

Hundreds of pre-school children in rural and remote communities in Timor-Leste have received learning packs from ChildFund, allowing them to continue their education during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Earlier this year a roll-out of government restrictions to curb the impact and spread of the virus in Timor-Leste resulted in the closure of schools across the country, leaving many children in disadvantaged communities without access to opportunities to learn and play.

ChildFund Timor-Leste has distributed educational packs (pictured right) to children in 10 early childhood development centres in Liquica and Lautem municipalities.

The educational packs include storybooks, toys, Lego, jigsaw puzzles, balls, drawing and writing materials, as well as soap and information on COVID-19 and hygiene.

Four-year-old Jenilda (pictured above with her mother Victoria) was scheduled to start school for the first time at an early education centre supported by ChildFund in Lautem when the pandemic hit.

She was eager to start learning, her mother Victoria says, but when the centre was forced to close because of government restrictions, Jenilda had to stay home and her education was interrupted.

The educational pack Jenilda received from ChildFund has brought her a lot of joy and kept her mind and body active, says Victoria. “The materials help our children learn and play at home,” she says.



COLLABORATING TO ACHIEVE CHANGE

Thank you to the following organisations and individuals whose generous support and assistance is vital to the work of ChildFund Timor-Leste:



- Asosiasaun Futuro Naroman • Asosiasaun Graca • Asosiasaun Moris Foun • Ba Futuru • Catalpa International • Cruz Vermelha de Timor-Leste • DHL • Fundasaun Alola • Health Alliance International • Mary MacKillop Today • ONG Fraterna • Plan International

ChildFund Timor-Leste would also like to thank the Timor-Leste Government for its support.

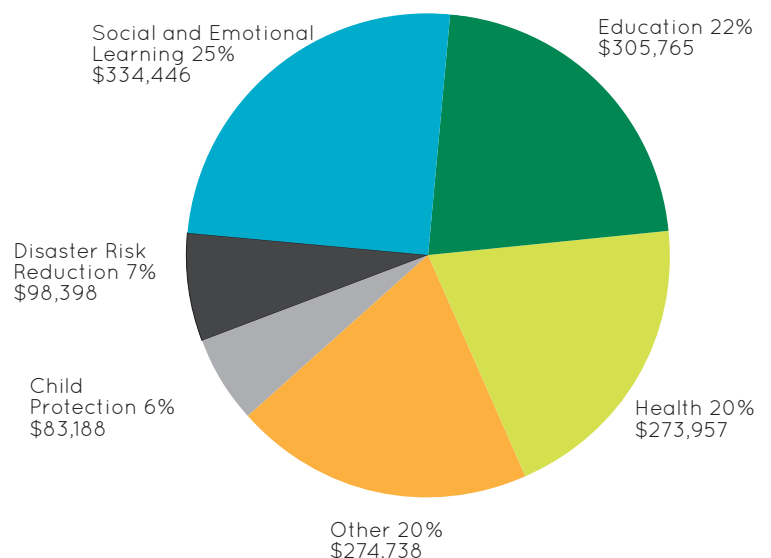
FINANCIAL REPORT

Financial report for year ended 30 June 2020

REVENUE	FY1920 (US\$)	FY1819 (US\$)
Donation	1,062,063	1,500,768
Grants	650,379	786,280
Other income	1,207	5,158
Total revenue	1,713,649	2,292,206

EXPENDITURE	FY1920 (US\$)	FY1819 (US\$)
Program and projects	1,370,492	1,528,915
Program support	204,538	226,586
Accountability and administration	318,557	266,960
Total expenditure	1,893,587	2,022,461

PROGRAM EXPENDITURE
FY1920 (US\$)



**BECAUSE
EVERY CHILD
NEEDS A
CHILDHOOD**

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